

DRAFT Data Assessment Team (DAT) Conference Call Notes
5/16/13 at 11:00 a.m.

Participants: Lucinda Shih (CCWD), Geir Aasen and Lauren Damon (DFW), Andy Chu, Edmund Yu and Elaine Jeu (DWR), Jon Speegle and Leigh Bartoo (FWS), Elizabeth Leeper (KMTG on behalf of SLDMWA), Owen Lu and RG Fernando (MWD), Eleanor Bartolomeo (SWRCB)

Sacramento River Salmonid Monitoring

Preliminary Rotary Screw Trap (RST) Report			
Species*	FWS Red Bluff Diversion Dam RST (Estimated Passage)	DFW Tisdale Weir RST (Catch)	DFW Knights Landing RST (Catch)
Date	No new biweekly data.	5/9/13 to 5/15/13**	Monitoring discontinued since 12/15/12.
CHNF		14	
CHNLF			
CHNW			
CHNS		1	
Ad-Clipped CHN		5	
SH			
Ad-Clipped SH			
*Chinook race based on length (Frank Fisher model); CHNF=Fall run, CHNLF=Late-fall run, CHNW=Winter run, CHNS= Spring run, SH = Steelhead. Species are unmarked unless noted as adipose-fin clipped (ad-clipped). Data subject to revision.			

**In summary, overall Chinook salmon catch is dropping off since the last reporting period of 5/1 to 5/8. Currently, DFW are still sampling at various periods during the night (1900 hours to 0700 hours) and day (0700 hours to 1900 hours). Unlike the previous reporting period, day/night trends are not as noticeable due to the lower catch total.

Graphical summaries of the monitoring data collected at the Sacramento River and at other locations can be found at <http://www.water.ca.gov/swp/operationscontrol/calfed/calfedmonitoring.cfm>. In addition, the biweekly passage reports of juvenile salmonids sampled at the Red Bluff Diversion Dam are available at http://www.fws.gov/redbluff/rbdd_biweekly.aspx.

Delta Fish Monitoring

Preliminary FWS Trawl and Seine Catch Report from 5/5/13 to 5/11/13				
Species*	Beach Seines	Mossdale Trawl**	Sacramento Trawl	Chippis Island Trawl
CHNF	16		377	236
CHNLF				
CHNW				
CHNS	1		4	41
Ad-Clipped CHN	2		105	58
SH				1
Hatchery SH				
DSM	2 (88 mm, Sandy Beach, no expression)			
LFS				
SPLT	13			3
*Chinook race based on length (Frank Fisher model); CHNF=Fall run, CHNLF=Late-fall run, CHNW=Winter run, CHNS= Spring run, SH = Steelhead, DSM=Delta smelt, LFS=Longfin smelt, SPLT = Splittail. Species are unmarked unless noted as adipose-fin clipped (ad-clipped). Data subject to revision.				

** From April to June, Mossdale trawls are being conducted by DFW (Region 4) and not by FWS. Based on preliminary data, DFW caught 594 unmarked Chinook salmon at the Mossdale trawls from 5/5 to 5/11.

The average fork length was 86.4 mm. In addition, 2 unmarked steelhead were observed with an average fork length of 195 mm.

Lastly, DFW conducted a Mossdale trawl efficiency test last Friday (5/10) and released 5,000 Chinook salmon marked with a purple upper caudal fin at the Mossdale boat ramp.

Information about the Delta fish monitoring data from FWS can also be found at <http://www.fws.gov/stockton/jfmp/>.

Salvage Monitoring

DWR shut down Banks pumping and salvage operations at 1300 hours on 5/6 and started up again at 2100 hours on 5/9. The shutdown is due to a replacement of a few pumps and inspection of gates, valves, primary channel, and louvers.

Preliminary DFW Salvage Report for Smelt and Other Species from 5/6/13 to 5/12/13				
Species	CVP		SWP	
	Salvage	Total to Date	Salvage	Total to Date
DSM*	4	212	32	458
LFS**	20	237	100	395
SPLT	8	49	4	122
GST				
WST		4		12
Notes: -DSM=Delta smelt, LFS=Longfin smelt, SPLT = Splittail, GST=Green sturgeon, WST=White sturgeon. -Salvage estimates are rounded to the nearest whole fish. -Total to date is the total since 10/1/12 (the start of water year 2013). -Data subject to revision.				

* No delta smelt <20 mm in fork length were reported in larval fish samples at the CVP fish facility during the reporting period. Similarly, no delta smelt < 20 mm in fork length were reported in larval fish samples at SWP fish facility during the period from 1500 hours on 5/2 to 0900 hours on 5/6.

Since the reporting period, both fish facilities have continued to salvage juvenile delta smelt. As of 5/15, the combined juvenile delta smelt salvage total is 662 fish. This is about 82% of the juvenile delta smelt take limit (i.e., 809 fish) for May and 28% of the overall juvenile delta smelt take limit (i.e., 2,350 fish) for water year 2013.

There was a question on whether there was a length criteria used to differentiate between juvenile and adult delta smelt in terms of tracking incidental take. Geir Aasen (DFW) and Leigh Bartoo (FWS) responded that there are no set length criteria. Juvenile delta smelt are considered young of the year fish. In general, delta smelt usually only live for one year and breed during only one time of the year. Therefore, any delta smelt born this spring will be considered a juvenile until the new water year starts and there should be very little overlap between juvenile and adult delta smelt. If there is overlap, then it should be apparent on what should be classified as a juvenile or as an adult based on length.

No adult delta smelt have been salvaged at the Delta fish facilities since 3/25 and it is not likely that adult delta smelt will be salvaged again this water year.

** Longfin smelt <20 mm in fork length were reported in larval fish samples at the CVP fish facility during the reporting period. No longfin smelt < 20 mm in fork length were reported in larval fish samples at the SWP fish facility during the period from 1500 hours on 5/2 to 0900 hours on 5/6.

Since the reporting period, longfin smelt salvage at the CVP fish facility has declined, while the SWP fish facility has continued to salvage longfin smelt.

Preliminary DFW Salvage Report for Salmonids from 5/6/13 to 5/12/13								
Species	Central Valley Project (CVP)				State Water Project (SWP)			
	Adipose-Fin Clipped (Ad-Clipped)		Non-Adipose Fin Clipped (Non-Clipped)		Adipose-Fin Clipped (Ad-Clipped)		Non-Adipose Fin Clipped (Non-Clipped)	
	Salvage	Loss	Salvage	Loss	Salvage	Loss	Salvage	Loss
CHNF			277	226			148	632
Total to Date	93	62	2,330	1,759	322	1,460	882	3,761
CHNLF								
Total to Date	165	118	28	18	616	2,780	57	260
CHNW								
Total to Date	67	53	129	98	120	542	142	633
CHNS			24	20			24	105
Total to Date	4	2	392	286	3	13	465	1,998
CHNU								
Total to Date								
SH			4	3			12	52
Total to Date	312	212	278	189	369	1,598	440	1,903
Notes: -Chinook race based on length (Delta model); CHNF=Fall run, CHNLF=Late-fall run, CHNW=Winter run, CHNS= Spring run, CHNU= Unknown race (Chinook greater than the length-at-date criteria), SH = Steelhead. -Salvage and loss estimates are rounded to the nearest whole fish. -Documentation on how to calculate salvage and Chinook loss can be found at ftp://ftp.delta.dfg.ca.gov/salvage/Salmon%20Loss%20Estimation/ . -Steelhead loss: SWP steelhead loss = salvage x 4.33 and CVP steelhead loss = salvage x 0.68. -Total to date is the total since 10/1/12 (the start of water year 2013). -Data subject to revision.								

Since the reporting period, the fish facilities are seeing an increase in the weekly loss trends of non-clipped fall-run Chinook salmon and ad-clipped steelhead and a decrease in weekly loss trends of non-clipped steelhead. Weekly loss trends for spring-run Chinook salmon, winter-run Chinook salmon, and late-fall run Chinook salmon remain more or less the same.

Salvage information is posted on the salvage FTP site (<ftp://ftp.dfg.ca.gov/salvage/>). If you cannot access the FTP site, you can also go to <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/delta/apps/salvage/Default.aspx> and click on "Salvage FTP Site."

Smelt Monitoring

20-mm Survey #5 was in the field from 5/6 to 5/9. Processing is ongoing and is now 55% complete. DFW collected 128 delta smelt that ranged in size from 6 mm to 27 mm. Of this total, 24 were from the south and central delta, 99 were from the Sacramento River, and 5 were from the confluence.

In addition, DFW collected 1,999 longfin smelt that ranged in size from 12 mm to 34 mm. Of this total, 25 were from the central and south delta, 1,154 were from the Sacramento River, 237 were from the confluence, and 583 were from Suisun Bay and westward.

DFW will begin 20-mm Survey #6 on 5/20 and there will be nine 20-mm Surveys done this season. For more information about the 20-mm Survey, please visit the DFW website: <http://dfg.ca.gov/delta/projects.asp?ProjectID=20mm>.

Smelt Working Group

The Smelt Working Group met this past Monday (5/13) and decided that existing and current conditions are protective of delta smelt and longfin smelt. For this week, the Smelt Working Group did not mention the need to reconvene if Old and Middle River (OMR) flow becomes increasingly negative in the -2,500 cfs to -3,000 cfs range.

After providing this week's recommendation, Leigh Bartoo (FWS) responded to a question about why there is monthly take limit in July for juvenile delta smelt if FWS RPA Component 2, Action 3 is anticipated to end either on 6/30 or when the 3-day mean water temperature at Clifton Court Forebay reaches 25° C. There is a monthly take limit for July since there is a possibility that juvenile delta smelt salvage might still occur past June at the Delta fish facilities. The Smelt Working Group will stop providing recommendations specific to OMR flow once Action 3 ends. However, DWR and Reclamation will need to seek consultation with FWS if the overall incidental take limit is exceeded even if Action 3 is no longer in place.

The Smelt Working Group notes and FWS determinations are posted at http://www.fws.gov/sfbaydelta/cvp-swp/smelt_working_group.cfm.

Delta Operations for Salmonids and Sturgeon (DOSS) Working Group

No NMFS representative from DOSS was present on the DAT conference call. However, Barb Byrne (NMFS) sent an e-mail update to DAT prior to the conference call. Excerpts from the e-mail update are below:

DOSS Update:

DOSS met on Tuesday, 5/14/13, and provided no advice to NMFS and WOMT.

Item of interest reported on DOSS:

Barging Experiment: CDFW is conducting an experiment to test the relative return rate of juvenile fall-run Chinook released in-river (at Broderick Boat Launch in West Sacramento) vs. juvenile fall-run Chinook barged to San Francisco Bay. This week, they are doing a paired release of 100,000 fish at each of the two release locations.

RPA Implementation Update:

Effective 5/10/13 (last Friday), the action response under Action IV.2.3 (OMR Flow Management Action) to operate to an OMR limit of no more negative than -2,500 cfs was relaxed to an OMR limit of no more negative than -5,000 cfs. This action response did not control export operations while in effect. A new OMR flow management action was triggered based on the combined steelhead loss of 38 reported for Monday, 5/13/13, which exceeded the daily wild steelhead loss criterion of 34 wild steelhead. As a result, the action response requires Reclamation and DWR to reduce exports to achieve an average net OMR flow of -3,500 cfs for a minimum of 5 days, with the 5-day running average OMR no more than 25% more negative at any time during the 5-day running average period (i.e., -4,375 cfs). Based on the 5-day running average OMR of -713 cfs ending on May 13, 2013, the CVP and SWP were already operating within the first stage action response of Action IV.2.3 on Tuesday, May 14, 2013, the day the loss was reported. Therefore, May 14, 2013, is day 1 of the action response.

Other News – Adult Chinook Rescue:

This rescue update is based on preliminary information subject to revision by CDFW.

With the approval of NMFS, CDFW has coordinated the rescue of approximately 250 adult Chinook salmon stranded in channels in the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge (located along I-5 just south of Willows). Twelve of the recovered fish had coded wire tags; all twelve tags were sourced to the 2010 hatchery release of winter-run Chinook salmon. CDFW and NMFS will be investigating the possible routing and timing for adult salmon access to this area. All rescued fish fit for release were given an external tag in an effort to determine the fate of the rescued salmon.

After reviewing the e-mail update, there were no questions or concerns that need to be addressed to NMFS or DOSS. DOSS notes are posted at <http://www.swr.noaa.gov/ocap/doss.htm>.

Operations

Preliminary Summary for 5/16/13			
SWP		CVP	
Clifton Court Inflow (cfs)	1,000	Jones Pumping Plant (cfs)	860
SWP San Luis Reservoir Share (TAF) as of Midnight	379	CVP San Luis Reservoir Share (TAF) as of Midnight	607
San Luis Reservoir Total (TAF) as of Midnight	986	American – Nimbus Reservoir Releases (cfs)	1,000
Feather – Oroville Reservoir Releases (cfs)	3,000	Sacramento – Keswick Reservoir Releases (cfs)	12,000
DELTA OPERATIONS			
Outflow (cfs)	~ 9,500	14-day Average OMR Flow as of 5/15/13 (cfs)	-977
X2 (km)	> 81	5-day Average OMR Flow as of 5/15/13 (cfs)	-958
E/I (%)	12.5% (3-day average)		

San Joaquin River Inflow at Vernalis: The SWP/CVP export limit based on a 3-day average of Vernalis inflow from D-1641 ended on 5/15. However, NMFS RPA Action IV.2.1 (San Joaquin River inflow to export (I:E) ratio) is in effect until 5/31 and requires a 1:1 I:E ratio since the water year type in the San Joaquin Valley is classified as critical unless Vernalis inflow drops below 1,500 cfs.

As of 5/15, Vernalis inflow is at 2,090 cfs and has been decreasing due to a reduction in Goodwin reservoir releases. Vernalis inflow is expected to drop to the 1,000 cfs range over the next few days. As a result, DWR and Reclamation will have to operate to the health and safety export level of 1,500 cfs rather than the 1:1 ratio.

At the time of the DAT conference call, NMFS RPA Action IV.2.1 was controlling SWP/CVP exports.

Western Delta Water Quality: As of 5/15, the 14-day average electrical conductivity (EC) on the Sacramento River at Emmaton is at 0.50 mS/cm and is above the 14-day average EC standard of ≤ 0.45 mS/cm from D-1641. However, the daily EC at Emmaton has been below 0.45 mS/cm since 5/12. In addition, the 14-day average EC at Jersey Point is at 0.35 mS/cm and is approaching the 14-day average EC standard of ≤ 0.45 mS/cm from D-1641.

Delta Cross Channel (DCC) Gates: From May 21 to June 15, D-1641 allows the DCC gates to be open, but requires the DCC gates to be closed for a total of 14-days per the CALFED Ops group. There are currently plans to open the DCC gates during the memorial day weekend, but the schedule has not been set yet.

There was a question on whether reservoir releases at Oroville and Keswick will be increased if the DCC gates are opened to help maintain the EC standard at Jersey Point. To address this question, Andy Chu (DWR) stated that DWR and Reclamation are watching the next tide very closely. The tidal influences are a lot greater than what is in the system and outflow will likely hold in its current range.

A summary of daily operations can also be viewed at <http://www.water.ca.gov/swp/operationscontrol/docs/delta/deltaops.pdf>.

South Delta Temporary Barriers Project Update

Excerpts from the 5/15 status update from Jacob McQuirk (DWR) is presented below:

DWR received the Section 404 CWA/Section 10 RHA permit for 2013-2017 on Tuesday May 7, and construction of the south Delta temporary rock barriers started on Wednesday May 8. Construction of the Middle River barrier and Old River near Tracy barrier both started on May 8,

and closure of the Middle River barrier was obtained on May 14 at approximately 2 PM. All flap gates at Middle River remain tied open. The Old River near Tracy barrier is currently scheduled to be completed on May 29 and the Grant Line barrier completed in mid June.

For more information about the Temporary Barriers Project, please visit http://baydeltaoffice.water.ca.gov/sdb/tbp/index_tbp.cfm.

Next Conference Call: The next DAT conference call is scheduled on 5/30 at 11:00 a.m. An e-mail update will be sent out before the conference call if an agency representative cannot call in. There will be no DAT conference call next week since CALFED Ops is meeting on 5/22. CALFED Ops meeting information can be found at <http://www.water.ca.gov/swp/operationscontrol/calfed/index.cfm>.

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